JULY 1992

Equity Matters

University of Toronto

Status of Women Office / Office of the President

Funding for women in graduate studies at the University of Toronto

More women as undergraduates and graduates are attending University than ever before. However since 1987 a number of reports have affirmed that women are not given the same support that is available to male students at the graduate level.

The first of these reports was published by the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) in which a number of recommendations were made to ensure the equitable treatment of female graduate students, to increase the proportion of women completing doctoral degrees in all disciplines, and to suggest developing a plan to increase the proportion of women who enter and successfully complete graduate programs, in particular those in which they are underrepresented. These recommendations point out that there are fewer women who complete their doctoral degrees than there are men, that graduate programs exist where women are still underrepresented, and that there are many cases in which equitable treatment for women does not exist.

Since the recommendations were made by the COU four studies have looked at the situation at the University of Toronto. The most recent is *A Survey of Recent and Current Doctoral Students at the University of Toronto* written in 1992 by J. Fletcher and R. Stren of the Centre for Urban and Community Studies. The report points out that students in Divisions I and II have less funding available than students in Divisions III and IV. Students in Divisions I and II also take more time to complete their degrees. According to this report lack of financial support will lengthen the time a student takes to complete a degree.

A report entitled *Review of the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Report of the "Status of Women in Ontario Universities"* published two years after the COU report by Rose Sheinin, then Vice Dean at the School of Graduate Studies at the University of Toronto, revealed that the School of Graduate Studies had yet to act on the recommendations of the COU. Professor Sheinin's research also pointed to serious discrepancies between the genders at the graduate level.

"Grad students, I think, are mostly here because they are dedicated to their fields of study. Why else would they endure years of overwork and poverty?" Division IV

Although in the 1980s men and women were registering at the School of Graduate Studies at a ratio of almost 50/50, graduation rates and funding displayed a preference for male students. Based on figures from 1978 to 1988 graduation rates on average for men and women in PhD programs were 60% and 50% respectively. The loss of male students in doctoral programs reached a plateau of 40% after 7 years. The percentage of loss was 50% after 8 years for women. (see figures 1 & 2). As for funding in 1989/90 men received both a larger proportion (58.7%) of the Open Fellowships and awards of higher value, i.e. 3-term fellowships. Only Division IV showed a tendency toward equal distribution of full and partial awards.

Professor Sheinin's report raised enough concern for the issue of funding that two committees were struck in 1989 to take on gender and funding at the School of Graduate Studies. One of these was the Committee on Opportunities for Women in Graduate Studies. This Committee, renamed the Gender Issues Committee, studied how the policies and practices of SGS affect graduate students differently when gender is taken into account and how to increase the number of women completing doctoral degrees. The Committee sent out a questionnaire to all female graduate students and a random selection of male students and gathered comments on various subjects including funding. The questionnaire revealed that while students in Division III commented on the need for more funding, students in Divisions I and II complained of a serious lack of funding. As a male student in the Physical Sciences and Engineering said, "*I feel I make more money and have more resources because of discrimination on subject matter; i.e. CS vs. Philosophy.*" In Division II there are students in graduate school without any source of funding: "*We need more funding, only 30% of our department gets anything and the rest starve....*" Inevitably students depend on teaching and research assistantships or on outside sources of income that prolong the

(Continued on page 3)

Les Quatorze Award

Mrs. Clarice Chalmers has offered an award to recognize outstanding achievement by a woman student in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Toronto. It is named for the fourteen women slain at l'Ecole Polytechnique on December 6, 1989. The first award was presented on May 21, 1992, to Susan Davies, who has just completed Third Year and is working in the Department of Mechanical Engineering with an NSERC summer fellowship. Congratulations and thanks to the winner and the donor of this wonderful award!

Carriers of Culture:
Native Women Affirming Their Own Way

For the past three years the Women's Studies Programme at New College has organized a public lecture series with the aim of inviting Aboriginal women from around the world to speak on their academic and social concerns. During the 1991/92 academic year, four First Nations women of North America participated in seminars for a Women's Studies course, and gave public lectures on campus. As a Canadian woman of Italian descent, I have learned a great deal about the separate and largely unknown realities of Native history and culture in North America. At the same time the lectures awoke in me an on-going process of self-reflection.

Anthropologist Beatrice Medicine, a Lakota/Sioux woman, talked about measuring our effectiveness as social beings. This means examining the culture we come from and our actions within our families and in our constituencies. For American Indian women, recognizing their culture has meant knowing that prestige for Native women came from a culturally acknowledged respect for motherhood. Native mothers, grandmothers, aunts and sisters are carriers of Native culture. In raising their own offspring and those of the community, Native women have had to mediate between two world-views and inevitably become analyzers of cultural change.

Today as well as in the past, many Native women have become involved in political and community organizations. As students and academics, Native women can take advantage of a rich variety of scholastic research tools to reclaim knowledge of Native history and culture. Beatrice Medicine insisted on the value of sharing the knowledge in academic journals, through creative writing, public speaking or personal networking. As carriers of culture, Native women, mothers, grandmothers, academics and writers, can continue giving younger generations of Native people an understanding of a sense of themselves.

Marlene Brant Castellano is Mohawk. She teaches Native Studies at Trent University, and is a member of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People in Canada. In her first lecture she shared with us an Ojibway saying:

> In order to know where
> you're going you have to know
> where you've come from.

She spoke of Native history since the Second World War. The effect of government policies imposing Canadian-European social structures in Native communities has been to marginalize women from spiritual and political participation in their own communities, and to marginalize Native people from economic and political participation in Canadian society. Marlene Brant Castellano called Canadian-European structures alien paradigms of knowledge that distorted her own understanding of her culture.

Speaking in an extremely personal manner, she offered her own life story as a case-study. As a child growing up on a Reserve she learned Native values and beliefs: the value inherent in motherhood, and the balance that characterized male-female relationships. She talked about the personal effects of government educational policies that undermined the education she received on the Reserve, and the personal conflict and anguish for Native people struggling between fulfilling their own cultural standards while conforming to the limited number of roles open to Native people in Canadian society. Native people are currently experiencing a period of recovery and need to affirm a Native way of interpreting reality.

When Native authors first began to be published in the 1960s, editors had them slotted as fantasy and science fiction writers for their use of the sacred and spiritual.

In February, novelist, poet, professor of English (U.C.L.A.), literary critic and editor Paula Gunn Allen, who is Laguna Pueblo/Sioux, gave two lectures. She talked about styles of creative writing by Native authors, and what it means to interpret reality from a Native perspective. She spoke of the thought-form systems that Native people grow up with, and how they affect the process of writing. Native literature, like Canadian-European literature, draws on the sacred tradition of its cultural background. For writers of Western descent, this points back to the Bible, which explains the value given to the written form, and the establishment of written literature as the canon. In the Native tradition oral tales, in all their variety, are the canon. In Native oral and written story-telling the sacred and the spiritual world are part of the structure of the tale.

With this in mind, Paula Gunn Allen read us stories by Native men and women, stories that spoke of strong women. In the Native world, she said, your femininity is powerful. Intermingled in her lectures, Paula Gunn Allen shared with us her sense of spirituality. She spoke of the universe of discourse that includes human males and females, heterosexuals and homosexuals, and the animals, and plants, the four winds and the water, thunder and soil, the sun, and the moon. In her own words, she said that if we listen to this discourse we will know that "the environment is not a political, not a chemical, but a spiritual issue."

The final speaker, Christine Welsh, is a Metis filmmaker and historian from Saskatchewan. Her most recent film "Women in the Shadows" was shown March 12 at New College. In a lecture given the previous week, she explained the process of making the film. The film speaks of how Christine Welsh gradually came to terms with her family background, with herself and her own identity as a Metis woman. In the process of uncovering her family background in order to gain a better understanding of self, she also uncovers a neglected aspect of Canadian history.

As a child Christine Welsh was aware of her Native background, but her efforts to learn more were never encouraged by her family. Both sides of her family denied their Metis heritage. As Christine Welsh struggled to understand more of her family background, she came to realize that the denial of their Native background by her Metis grandmothers and aunts was a means of survival. In order to survive and raise their children, these women sought to assimilate to Canadian-European society.

Gradually through her grandmother and great aunt Christine Welsh was able to trace back her family history through to her Native and Metis great-grandmothers. During the fur trade of the 1800s, they were the Native "country wives" of fur traders. These women were both resourceful and helpful to their immigrant husbands. Through their Native wives, these men established trade alliances with

(Continued on page 4)

completion of their degrees.

The other Committee that began working at the same time was the Committee on Eligibility and Distribution of University of Toronto Open Fellowships. The distribution by Division and by gender of Open Fellowships dominated the discussions of this committee. The findings of the Committee revealed that women receive less overall support from all sources (including loans and teaching assistantships) than their male counterparts. To quote the Report "*there is no exception to this systematic discrepancy.*" Loans excluded, women receive systematically less support per student than men in the four Divisions in both PhD and Master's programs. Figures 3 & 4 from the Report display the ratios of male to female students holding awards and the average level of support held. They can be compared to figure 5 showing relative enrolment by gender in each Division.

The report from the Committee on Eligibility and Distribution of University of Toronto Open Fellowships recommended the compilation on an annual basis of data concerned with numbers of students by gender registering for graduate studies, the number receiving awards and what type of awards and the level of support awarded. The Associate Dean of each Division is to monitor the distribution of University of Toronto Opens between men and women to ensure equity and call on any graduate co-ordinator to explain any significant discrepancy between the levels of enrollment and percentage of women funded or levels of support between men and women. The four Associate Deans are to report to the Dean on an annual basis on distribution of graduate funding between men and women for every unit in their Division. Currently the School of Graduate Studies is in the process of developing a computer program to collect and have the data automatically compiled and readily available.

Now that data are available some changes are evident since Sheinin's report. Division III the Physical Sciences and Engineering still enrolls fewer women than any other Division, however their numbers have steadily increased since 1985/86. Division III is the only Division where women held a proportion of awards equivalent to the percentage of women registering. In 1990/91 15% of the students registering were women and women received 15% of Open Fellowships granted.

"I've been lucky with scholarships and research funding. It is definitely a sacrifice financially, but it is also an investment. Nobody forces me to do this!" Division II

Funding is part of a wider issue concerning graduate students, mentorship. At a teach-in on sexism and violence against women called *Still speaking out* (held on March 3, 1992) during a session on graduate students and their supervisors a female student complained of the difficulty of meeting with her supervisor. She said it is common for him to meet with male students for drinks to discuss work. However she felt uncomfortable having to run after her supervisor in the department, without even considering discussing her work with him over a drink. Her supervisor, unaware of the situation, is placing her at a disadvantage.

Mentorship involves more than registering students and funding them. In the broadest sense mentoring includes having faculty role models of both genders who are concerned with the time to completion for Master's and Doctoral students, the dollar value of fellowships and awards to students and whether Master's students choose to continue and work toward a Doctorate. Rose Sheinin claimed that in all of these women came out with less, a situation the Graduate School is committed to changing. *Rita Kindl*

Figure 1: Cohort Analysis of Progress for Female Doctoral Candidates, University of Toronto, 1978-1988

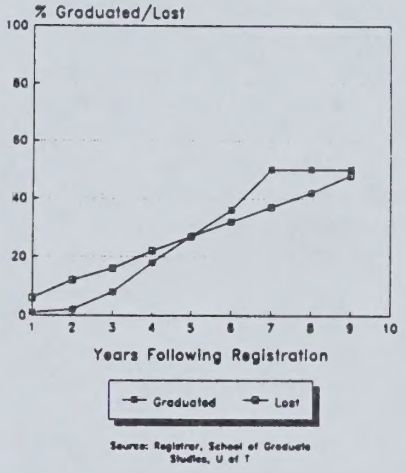

Figure 2: Cohort Analysis of Progress for Male Doctoral Candidates, University of Toronto, 1978-1988

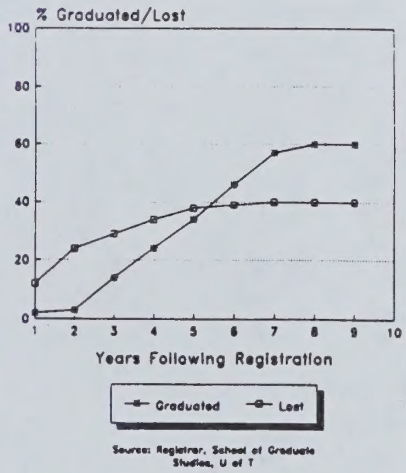

Figure 3: Students Holding Awards (Male/Female) 1988/89

	Ph.D.	Master's
I	M	M
II	M	F
III	M	F
IV	M	F
Overall	M	F

Figure 4: Average Level of Support 1988/89

	Ph.D.	Master's
I	M	M
II	F	M
III	F	M
IV	F	F
Overall	M	M

Figure 5: Students (Male/Female) 1988/89

	Ph.D.	Master's
I	F	F
II	M	F
III	M	M
IV	M	F
Overall	M	F

Native clans and nations, and were able to survive the harsh realities of daily existence in Northern Canada. Christine Welsh's Native grandmothers bore children by these men, but were abandoned once the fur traders felt themselves sufficiently established to send for and marry English women. While coming to terms with her own family background, Christine Welsh opened an area neglected by Canadian history. As she retraced the history of her grandmothers, Christine Welsh understood how they chose assimilation as a means of survival.

These lectures have encapsulated the realities of Native history, social organization, and spirituality. In this period of Native recovery, we are only beginning to become aware of a marginalized North American reality. On a personal level I found there was much to be learned from women who are looking at their own cultural past, in an effort to understand who they are and where they are going.

Rita Kindl

Status Quote

"This has gone on for centuries. There's a biological imperative behind it."

A representative of the Ontario Criminal Lawyers Association, speaking in opposition to proposed new federal legislation on sexual assault which would establish the need to obtain a sexual partner's consent.

Renovations and an Anniversary

In 1972 Hart House first admitted women as members, previously women could either come as the guests of male members or work as support staff. When Hart House was built in 1919 it was reserved for the recreational, athletic and social needs of the male students. In 1919 the student body was predominantly male, by 1972 this was far from true. Since the early 1970s, when a small locker room was made available to its female members, Hart House has improved its facilities for women. This Spring the locker rooms and pool area were closed for renovations that will allow the current men's change room to provide two separate locker rooms with equal facilities for the men and women.

The women's locker room that is being replaced was converted in 1979 from a locker room for Senior male members. For several reasons the locker room is not satisfactory. First of all, the women's facility is one third the size of the men's, with 480 lockers, 100 lockerettes and 12 showers compared with1 200 lockers, 3 000 lockerettes and 44 showers for the men. Additionally important, the locker room for women is some distance from the Locker Office and the swimming pool, and is not considered safe. Women have to walk down a long public corridor to reach the pool. Although a partition does screen the entrance, there is little privacy between the locker room change area and the hall. In the Spring of1988, following reports of a male intruder in the locker room on six different occasions, a security desk was placed outside the locker room and security staff were hired. Further security measures became necessary when, owing to a staffing shortage and misunderstanding, the security desk was left unattended for two hours and a man broke in and attacked a female member.

Planning and fund-raising for the renovations for the locker rooms began in 1985. Plans have been expanded to the swimming pool, which has not had any substantial renovations in nearly 75 years. Unable to look to the University for financial help, Hart House will meet the cost of the combined project from funds currently in its capital reserve and from a special 10% surcharge on all Hart House fees for a period not to exceed 10 years.

The renovated pool, locker and change rooms will open in the Fall of 1992 to coincide with the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the admission of women members. Events already planned throughout next year include an art exhibit featuring works by women artists from the House's permanent collection, a gala luncheon, and a story-telling evening of women's memories of Hart House over 70 years.

Rita Kindl

Equity Matters

Produced by
Lois Reimer and Rita Kindl
Status of Women Office
978-2196 / 2757

Status of Women Office
University of Toronto
Office of the President
Simcoe Hall, Room 240
27 King's College Circle
Toronto Ontario M5S 1A1